

DOUG
BUFFONE'S



BEAR REPORT

TM A NEWSPAPER DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE CHICAGO BEARS AND THE NFL

Vol. 12, No. 14 November 9, 1987

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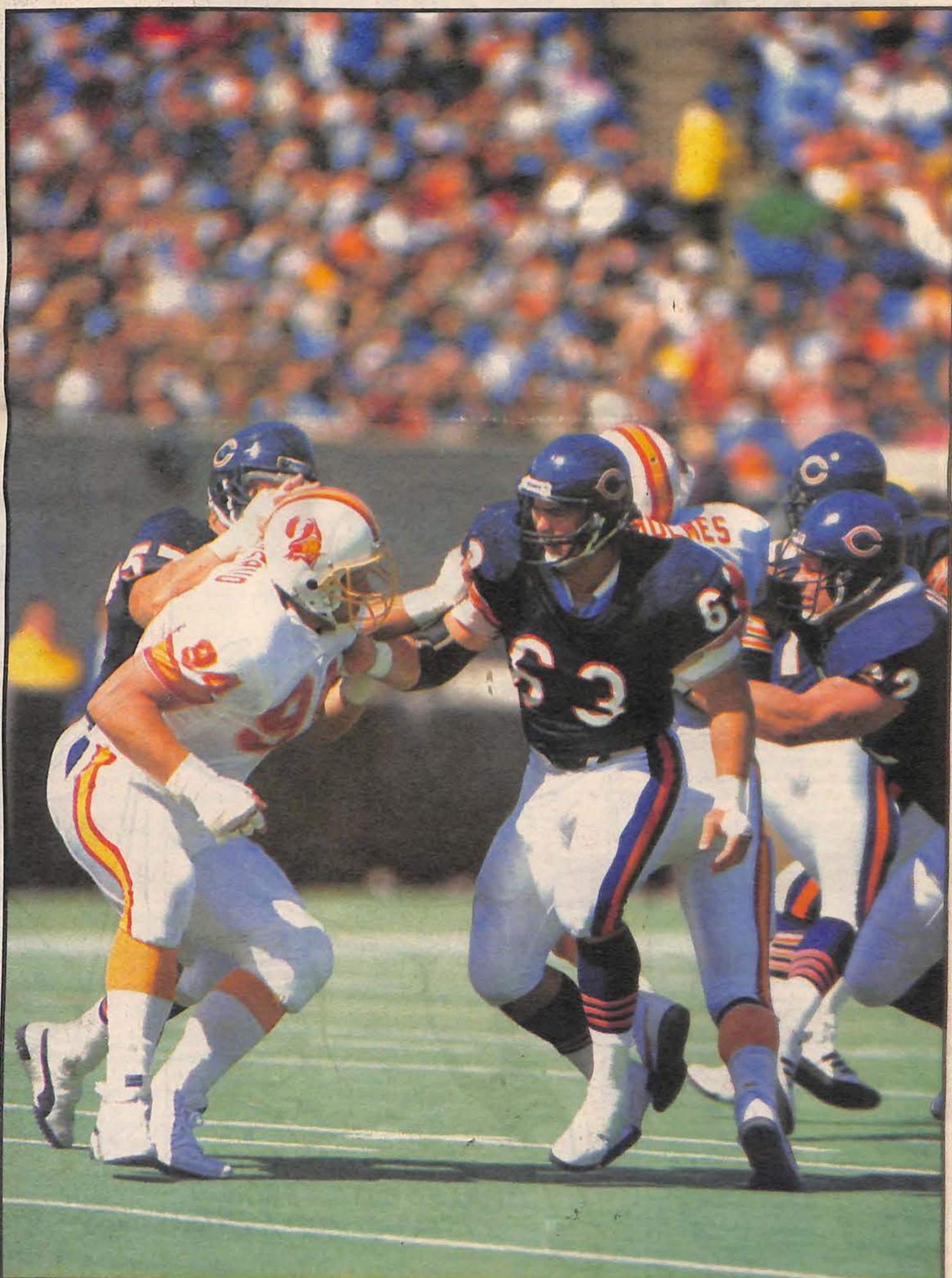
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A newspaper devoted exclusively to the Chicago Bears and the NFL

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Center Jay Hilgenberg leads the Bear offensive line in its quest to keep Jim McMahon healthy. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

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Every NFL team gunning at the Bears again

This isn't exactly the way the Bears want to keep winning games. But as long as they can keep doing it, you can't complain too much.

DOUG BUFFONE



The Bears are doing what champions have to do. They're winning games when they're not at their best. Last week they slipped past Tampa Bay, 27-26, and this week they made another two-touchdown comeback to beat the Chiefs, 31-28.

That's not really the way to go, but if they can do it that way, fine. Against better teams, though, the Bears won't be able to get away with it.

I think what the Bears went through last year is what they're going through again this year. In 1986 they were the champions and everyone wanted to knock them off. This year with the poor start the Giants have had, the Bears again are considered the best team in football. And that means everyone is gunning for them again. They're the big,

bad Bears and everyone wants to beat them. No one will roll over for Chicago.

Everyone wants to knock them off, especially the teams in the NFC Central Division. Let's face it, the other teams in the division are fed up with the Bears winning.

Next week it will be the same thing. Green Bay will give the Bears everything they want and more. Chicago easily has more talent than the Packers, but Green Bay will be ready.

And the last couple of years there's been a lot of bad stuff going on between the two teams, so you don't know what's going to happen this time around. Remember last year's game in Green Bay on Monday night. The Packers gave Chicago a rough time and Steve Fuller had to lead a fourth-quarter comeback to give the Bears the win.

The way things are going now, it looks like the same thing could happen this time. It's not going to be an easy road.

What the Bears need to improve on in defense is making the big play. They need to create more turnovers than they have so far this season. Against Kansas City, Mike Singletary came up with the big hit when he forced Christian Okoye to fumble at the Bear 19 in the second half. That may have been the biggest play of the game because if Kansas City scores there, the game might have been out of reach.

Some work needs to be done. The Bears are struggling now. But every team goes through a period like this, and the good teams still come out of it winning. And that's what Chicago has done so far.

Doug's Picks

Bears by 17 over Packers
Chicago will blow them out

Browns by 7 over Falcons
Atlanta isn't showing much

Cowboys by 10 over Lions
Detroit one of poorest in league

Broncos by 6 over Bills
Denver will get on a roll

49ers by 4 over Oilers
Offense will pull it out

Vikings by 7 over Raiders
Los Angeles has no quarterback

Bengals by 6 over Dolphins
Miami won't hold down Cincy offense

Saints by 9 over Rams
Los Angeles really struggling

Chiefs by 2 over Steelers
Kansas City showed something vs. Bears

Chargers by 3 over Colts
San Diego keeps surprising

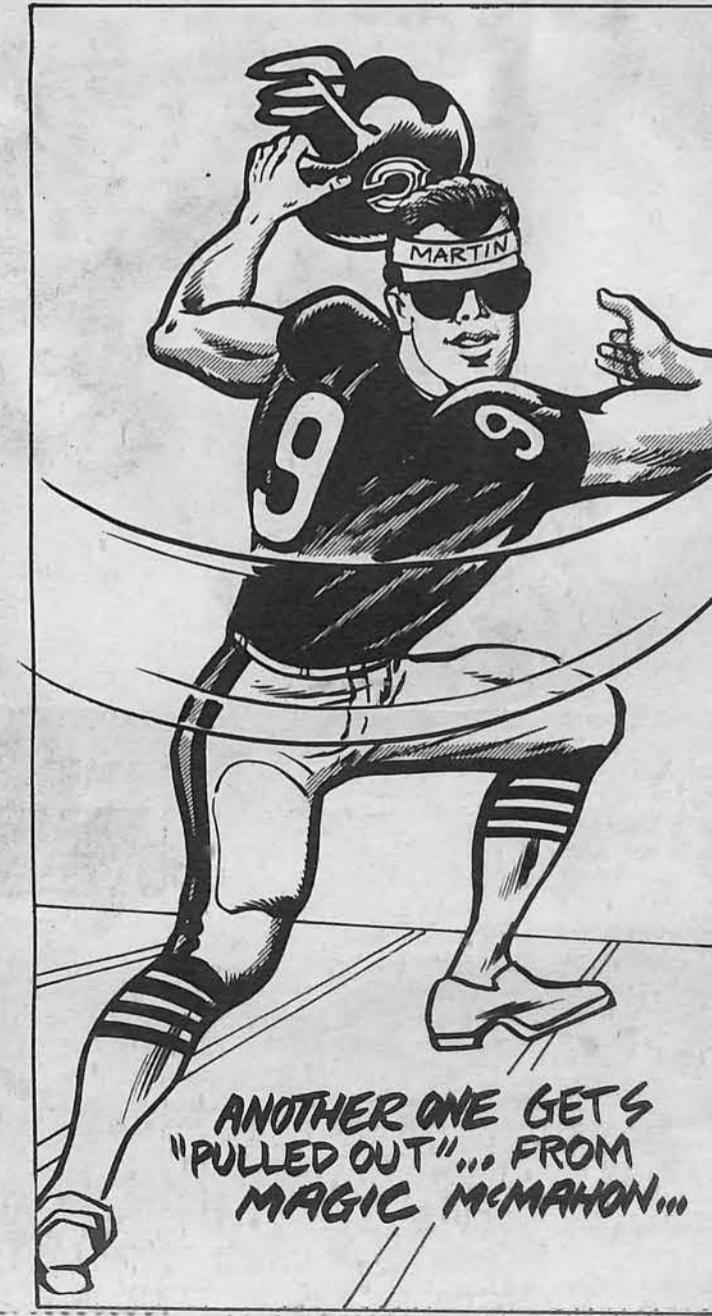
Buccaneers by 2 over Cardinals
St. Louis doesn't have much

Redskins by 10 over Eagles
No problem for Washington

Giants by 7 over Patriots
New York will come back strong

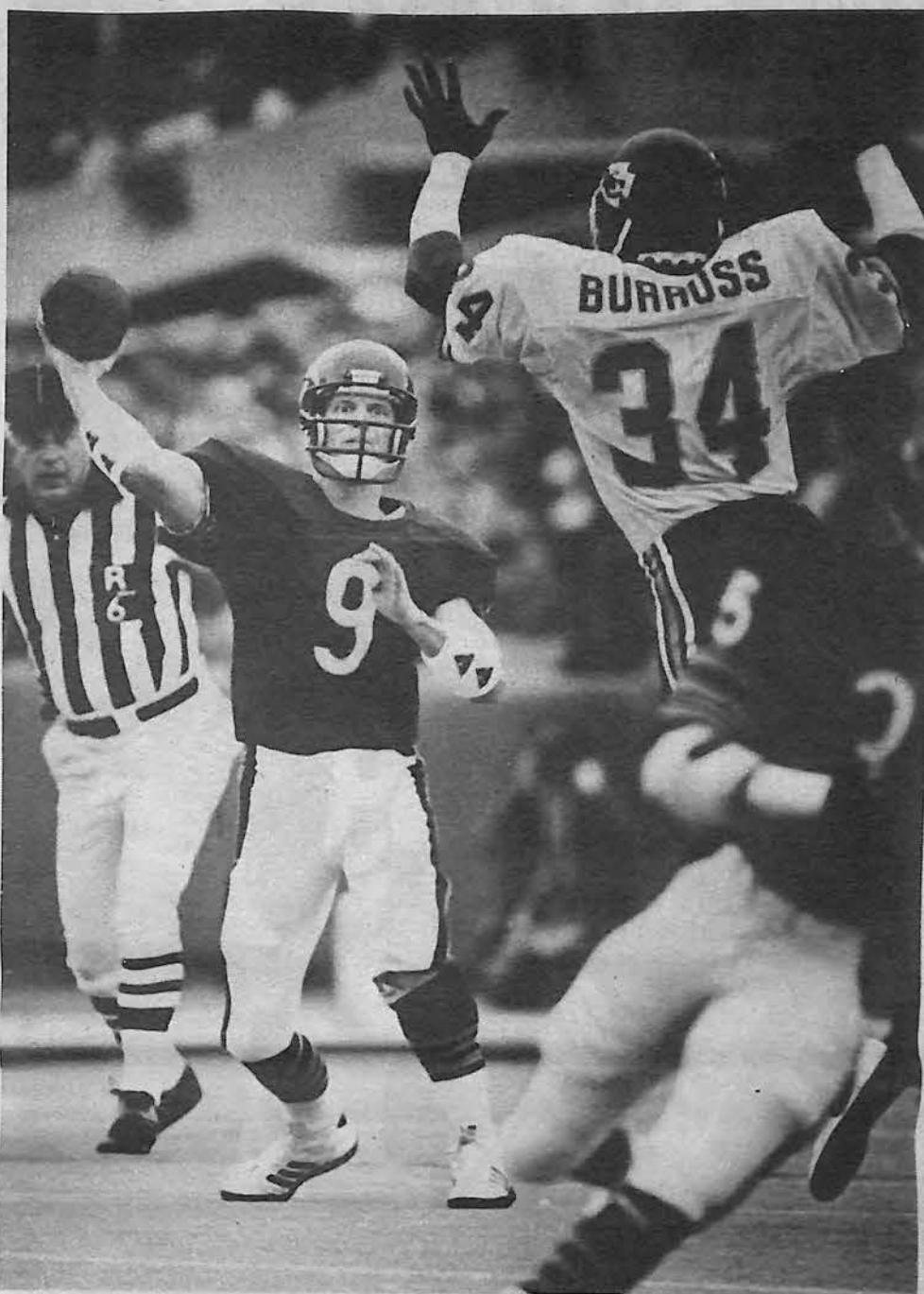
Seahawks by 6 over Jets
Seattle one of best in league

DRAW PLAY By Dick Kulpa



DICK KULPA
SUN UPBEATS
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After injuries, McMahon plays same way



The Bears have eight regular season games left, and Jim McMahon has never started eight straight games in one season. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

Jim McMahon will be the starting quarterback "until there'll be an injury," said coach Mike Ditka.

The words sounded strange, despite their apparent truth. Injury is inevitable, it seems, especially when McMahon is involved. Yet the specter of such misfortune usually goes unspoken.

DON PIERSON



Some things are better left unmentioned, even when they are no secret. Perhaps Ditka feels bad luck will change if he talks about it rather than ignores it. Grab that black cat and sit down under this ladder and let Ditka speak of his worst fears.

"It bothers me," Ditka admitted.

True to form, McMahon was never worried about taking his first hit following Dec. 12 shoulder surgery. He knew it was going to happen sooner or later, so why worry?

It happened the day the strike ended, not on the football field but on the basketball court.

"The only thing I worry about is he got ripped, really nailed by Ron Holmes on one

While scrimmaging with teammates at the Multiplex in Deerfield, where the Bulls practice, McMahon went up for a layup and William "The Refrigerator" Perry bent McMahon's right arm back exactly the way doctors feared might aggravate the injury.

McMahon said it hurt like crazy for a moment and then went away.

"I don't think I'll get hit any harder than that," McMahon said.

Richard Dent, a witness, was more impressed by what happened after the incident.

"He hit three jumpers, so I knew he was ready," Dent said.

Hits come early

In Tampa, McMahon took an immediate dose of contact. On the second play, he was blitzed, but the linebacker only grabbed his shoulders, enabling McMahon to spin away quickly and get off a pass that fell incomplete.

On third down, McMahon took matters into his own hands and ran. He landed on his right shoulder as two Bucs fell on top of him. It was as if McMahon were a defensive lineman, slamming his own helmet with his hands before a game to get comfortable for the ensuing punishment.

"Nothing's changed," Ditka said. "He ran the ball and dove head-first instead of sliding. He's not going to do it the way you tell him; he's going to do it his way, because the only thing he's trying to do is make a good play happen."

"The only thing I worry about is he got ripped, really nailed by Ron Holmes on one

play. I didn't know if he would get back up or not. Those things bother me."

They don't seem to bother McMahon.

McMahon had won 23 starts in a row before the Tampa rescue, but the Bears had played 53 games during that period. So injury is a fair topic for discussion. But McMahon is so much more fun to watch play than to watch sit. When he's not playing, those Taco Bell commercials lose something in the translation.

The past is a scary way to predict McMahon's future. He never has started more than seven games in a row for the Bears since arriving in 1982. Not all of that is injury's fault.

He started the last seven games of his strike-interrupted rookie season and the first six and last seven of his Vince Evans-interrupted 1983 season. His last loss when apparently healthy was Dec. 4, 1983, in Green Bay.

His last loss before his current win streak was Oct. 14, 1984, but he played that game with a broken right hand and took a pain-killing shot on the sidelines before the third quarter.

He started six games in a row during one stretch in 1984, although some of them were with the broken hand.

He started six games in a row in two separate stretches in 1985, the second ending in the Super Bowl.

In 1986, he played in only six games total, no more than three in a row.

Goal is to keep McMahon healthy

Since the Bears have eight games left and hope for three more playoff games, odds are against him. On the other hand, maybe the law of averages is for him.

"Our goal is to keep him healthy. It's hard to be recognized as one of the best in the league when you're injured so much," Ditka said. "He can take his spot with the very best in the league."

In many polls rating quarterbacks, McMahon is simply left out. His name appears at the bottom with an asterisk: injured. Magazines are afraid to feature him for fear he will be sidelined before the ink gets wet, let alone dries.

But when he plays, he wins.

"He has no regard for doing anything pretty," Ditka said.

Tampa Bay linebacker Scot Brantley expressed the respect the Bucs had for him that caused them to back off so much in the final two minutes they lost the game.

"I admire McMahon more than any quarterback in the game," Brantley said. "He's like a linebacker in a quarterback's uniform. There's not a better competitor at that position who's ever played the game."

McMahon called the plays on the final drive, as any quarterback does in the two-minute drill. Ditka isn't ready to let McMahon call all the plays, and he objects to some — not all — of McMahon's audibles.

Ditka had to admire the short touchdown pass to fullback Neal Anderson that won it.

"Coach Ditka couldn't have called that play," said Coach Ditka. "Impossible to call."

It was a play designed for the middle of the field, where receivers have more room to run the routes. It is unconventional to call it on the six-yard line.

"But he knew what he wanted to do. He called it to get the routes run a certain way," Ditka said.

It's a shame no one can control injuries so cleverly.

1987 Bears Schedule

REGULAR SEASON

Chicago 34, N.Y. Giants 19
Chicago 20, Tampa Bay 3
Sun., Sept. 27 at Detroit, noon
Chicago 35, Philadelphia 3
Chicago 27, Minnesota 7
New Orleans 19, Chicago 17
Chicago 27, Tampa Bay 26
Chicago 31, Kansas City 28
Sun., Nov. 8 at Green Bay, noon
Mon., Nov. 16 at Denver, 8 p.m.
Sun., Nov. 22 DETROIT, noon
Sun., Nov. 29 GREEN BAY, noon
Sun., Dec. 6 at Minnesota, 7 p.m.
Mon., Dec. 14 at San Francisco, 8 p.m.
Sun., Dec. 20 SEATTLE, noon
Sun., Dec. 27 at L.A. Raiders, 3 p.m.

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GAME WRAPUP

A new style for the old Bears

Two more fourth-quarter touchdowns give Bears win

By Michael Polzin
Managing Editor

CHICAGO — Supposedly, these are the real Bears playing again. But they don't seem to be playing the same style of football they used to.

The real Bears don't have a defense that gives up 54 points in two games.

The real Bears don't rely on the offense to score 58 points in two games.

The real Bears don't have to come back from 14 points down to win in the final minutes of the game.

The real Bears don't let their quarterback call all the plays.

And the real Bears don't have to rely on their passing game because the running game gets shut down.

But all that is exactly what the Bears did while coming back from 14 points down in the second half to beat Kansas City, 31-28, Sunday at Soldier Field.

The Bears proved to themselves that they're more than a great defensive football team. They proved that when one part of their game is struggling, another part can still get the job done.

"We're a football team," said head coach Mike Ditka. "We're not an offense, and we're not a defense, and we're not a special teams. We're a team. That's the way we have to play and that's the way we have to act. And I think that's what's gonna happen from now on."

Offense picks up defense

Chicago came through in every aspect of the game when it had to. When the defense struggled early in the game, the offense and special teams kept the game within reach. And in the second half the defense got tough, allowing only three first downs after Kansas City built a 28-14 lead with 11:43 left in the third quarter. That allowed the offense to put the Bears on top.

"Hopefully we won't make that a habit," said running back Neal Anderson.

"It seemed like *deja vu* to me," said rookie tight end Cap Boso.

Added safety Dave Duerson, "They've certainly shown a lot of spunk. McMahon and the offense have done wonders for us."

The offense did it with the McMahon-to-Willie Gault combination that teamed up for two fourth-quarter touchdowns.

With less than two minutes gone in the fourth quarter McMahon hit Gault on a 25-yard touchdown pass to make the score 28-24. Three plays before the pass the Bears switched to a hurry-up offense and McMahon threw underneath the coverage to his running backs twice before going deep to Gault.

"The hurry-up offense is a good offense for us," Gault said. "And Jim is able to call his own plays. So it wasn't a big deal at all."

On Kansas City's next possession the Bears got a break after Chiefs' quarterback Bill Kenney hit Stephon Paige on a 51-yard pass to the Bear 19. On the next play Christian Okoye fumbled the ball after getting hit by Mike Singletary and Duerson recovered, giving Chicago possession at its own 21.

"If they score there, it's really over," Ditka said.

The Bears started with the hurry-up offense again, and McMahon completed passes of nine yards to Boso and 21 yards to Gault to move to the Chiefs' 46.

Anderson gets key first down

Two plays later the Bears faced a third and six from the Kansas City 42, and Neal Anderson got seven yards on a reverse run.

After McMahon was sacked for a loss of three yards on first down, he hit Gault for a 38-yard touchdown pass and the Bears' first lead of the game at 31-28 with 4:44 left to play.

"They were really deep and the middle was wide open," Gault said. "Jim said he



Dennis Gentry crosses the goal line as he returns a first-quarter kickoff 88 yards for a touchdown in Sunday's 31-28 Bear win over the Chiefs. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

didn't see me and just threw the ball where he thought I'd be. And it was right where I wanted it because I wanted to spin back outside."

Ditka allowed McMahon to start calling most of the plays in the second half, and McMahon opted to put in the hurry-up offense. "That was Jim's idea and it was a very good idea," Ditka said.

"It gets people out of position," McMahon said. "As long as we know what we're doing it gives the offense the advantage."

The unconventional strategy worked in this unconventional game.

"This is not the way the Bears usually pull out victories," McMahon said. "It's not something we plan to do going into a ballgame. But it shows a lot of character on this team. It sends a message to the rest of the clubs in the league: you might have the Bears down, but you don't have them out."

The Bears sure looked down in the first half of the game.

The Chiefs built a 14-0 lead on two touchdown passes by Kenney. The first came on the opening drive of the game, when Kansas City moved 81 yards and scored on a 29-yard pass from Kenney to Carlos Carson.

Slow starts must end

"We've always had slow starts. But that's something we've got to change," said Duerson. "Teams are beginning to realize that we are vulnerable the first series. We have to dictate terms immediately and get into the

flow of our ballgame."

The Chiefs got the ball back on the Bears' second offensive play of the game, when Emery Moorehead fumbled after catching a pass. The Chiefs' Deron Cherry recovered the ball at the Bear 41.

Kansas City took seven plays to move the ball to the 15-yard line. From there, Kenney hit tight end Jonathan Hayes in the end zone over Reggie Phillips for the second Chiefs' touchdown with only 9:41 elapsed in the game.

But on the ensuing kickoff, Dennis Gentry returned the ball 88 yards for a touchdown, the third time he's done that in his career.

The Chiefs threatened to score again early in the second quarter on a 35-yard field-goal attempt by Nick Lowery. But Dan Hampton pushed through the line to block the kick.

"Again, the kicking game came up with some great plays," Ditka said. "The blocked field goal was a great play by Dan."

Boso, who had two big catches on the winning drive against Tampa Bay a week earlier, came through with some big catches for the Bears in the second quarter.

Moorehead has tough day

Boso entered the game after Moorehead had a pass bounce off his hands and intercepted by Lewis Cooper at the Bear 43. But Kansas City was forced to punt after three plays, giving the ball back to the Bears at

Continued Page 15



Cap Boso drags a Kansas City defender after he grabs one of his four catches in Sunday's game at Soldier Field. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

Bears-Chiefs game statistics

SCORING SUMMARY						
Kansas City Chiefs						14 7 7 0 — 28
Chicago Bears						7 7 3 14 — 31
Chiefs, 1, 5:42, Carson, 29-yard pass from Kenney (Lowery, kick), 7-0						
Chiefs, 1, 9:41, Hayes, 15-yard pass from Kenney (Lowery, kick), 14-0						
Bears, 1, 10:00, Gentry, 88-yard kickoff return (Butler, kick), 14-7						
Bears, 2, 9:55, Boso, 28-yard pass from McMahon (Butler, kick), 14-14						
Chiefs, 2, 15:00, Moriarty, 4-yard pass from Kenney (Lowery, kick), 21-14						
Chiefs, 3, 3:17, Paige, 43-yard pass from Kenney (Lowery, kick), 28-14						
Bears, 3, 12:30, Butler, 27-yard field goal, 28-17						
Bears, 4, 1:37, Gault, 25-yard pass from McMahon (Butler, kick), 28-24						
Bears, 4, 10:15, Gault, 38-yard pass from McMahon (Butler, kick), 28-31						
Attendance: 63,498; tickets distributed: 66,030; unused 2,532; time: 3:08						
Weather: possible showers, temperature: 60 degrees, humidity 84%; wind and direction: 6 mph S						

FINAL TEAM STATISTICS

	Chiefs	Bears
TOTAL FIRST DOWNS	20	20
By Rushing	5	7
By Passing	14	12
By Penalty	1	1
THIRD DOWN EFFICIENCY	8-15	8-15
FOURTH DOWN EFFICIENCY	0-1	1-3
TOTAL NET YARDS	367	343
Total Off. Plays (Inc. times passing)	64	69
Av. Gain per Off. Play	5.7	5.0
NET YARDS RUSHING	111	80
Total Rushing Plays	34	30
Av. Gain Per Rush. Play	3.3	2.7
NET YARDS PASSING	256	263
Times Thrown — Yds. Lost Att. To Pass	2-14	5-24
Gross Yds. Passing	270	287
PASS ATT. — COMP. — HAD INTERCEPTED	28-15-1	34-23-1
Av. Gain Per Pass Play (Inc. times thrown passing)	8.5	6.7
PUNTS — NO. AND AV.	5-35.6	2-23.0
Had Blocked	0	0
TOTAL RET. YARDAGE	48	169
No. and Yds. Punt Ret.	0-0	3-29
No. and Yds. KO Returns	2-48	3-140
No. and Yds. Interc. Ret.	1-0	1-0
PENALTIES — NO. AND YDS.	7-45	3-25
FUMBLES — NO. AND LOST	3-1	1-1
TOUCHDOWNS	4	4
Rushing	0	0
Passing	4	3
Returns	0	1
EXTRA POINTS MADE — ATT.	4-4	4-4
FG MADE — ATT.	0-1	1-2
TIME OF POSSESSION	30:36	29:24

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Bears win battle of the special teams

By David Marran
Bear Report Staff

CHICAGO — For the second straight week, the Bears' special teams came up with the big plays and sparked the club to a dramatic, come-from-behind victory.

In Tampa last week, Al Harris blocked an extra-point and Dennis McKinnon returned a punt 65 yards for a touchdown to help the Bears rally past the Buccaneers, 27-26.

Sunday in Soldier Field, history was repeated as a blocked kick and kick return for a touchdown contributed in the Bears' 31-28 comeback win over the Kansas City Chiefs.

"Our special teams pitched in and helped out," Bears head coach Mike Ditka said. "The kicking game came up with some big plays."

Usually, it is the Chiefs' special teams that turn in the big plays. Last season, the Chiefs' special teams blocked a team-record 10 kicks and scored five touchdowns en route to a playoff berth. The unit was so impressive that special teams coach Frank Gansz was promoted to head coach at season's end.

This season, the Chiefs' special teams made an immediate impact when rookie Paul Palmer returned a kick 95 yards in the fourth quarter to give Kansas City a 20-13 win over the San Diego Chargers on opening day.

"Palmer is a great return man," Ditka said. "He's done a good job and he brings a lot of them out very well."

Gentry runs for touchdown

Palmer's counterpart on the Bears, Dennis Gentry, added to his league-leading kickoff return total by running back three kicks for 140 yards Sunday. His biggest return of the day was an 88-yard, first-quarter touch-

down which halted a 14-point outburst by the Chiefs.

After Kansas City's second touchdown, Gentry took the ensuing kickoff at the 12-yard line, ran to the right and cut up the sideline. After getting two key blocks from Thomas Sanders and Calvin Thomas at the 28, Gentry out-ran kicker Nick Lowrey to the end zone for his third career kickoff return for a touchdown.

"Dennis Gentry's kickoff return was the biggest play of the game," said defensive end Dan Hampton. "That just shows how important special teams are to the whole team."

The Chiefs flexed their special teams muscle later in the first quarter when cornerback Albert Lewis penetrated the Bears' offensive line and blocked Bryan Wagner's punt. After the block, the Chiefs marched to the Bears' 18-yard line and set up for a field goal.

Usually, a field goal would be a sure thing for Kansas City because Lowrey hadn't missed an extra-point or a field goal this year. Plus, Lowrey entered 1987 with the second best field goal percentage in NFL history.

But the Chiefs were foiled when Hampton got his left hand on the 35-yard field goal try and the Bears took over at their own 26.

"We've blocked a lot of field goals here over the years," Hampton said. "Buddy Ryan brought that technique from Minnesota where they made a living blocking kicks like that for years and years."

Hampton gives teammates credit

Although Hampton got credit for the block, the nine-year veteran out of Arkansas was quick to point out that the play involved the entire defensive line.

"It's not just me. Al Harris, Mark Bortz and William Perry are in there helping," Hampton said. "It's a 4-on-3 mismatch. We just try to collapse the offensive line back about



The Bears special teams unit came up with some big plays Sunday, including a blocked field-goal attempt by Dan Hampton. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

three yards and get our hands up.

"There's a little skill to it but, more than anything else, it's effort and heart. We wouldn't give up and it turned out to be a big play."

The third quarter featured two big plays by the special teams, both of which led to Bear scores.

The first was a 27-yard field goal by Kevin Butler which cut Kansas City's lead to 28-17.

Crucial to the field goal was center Mark Rodenhauser's long snap. Although the snap on the field goal was on the mark, Ditka was not pleased with Rodenhauser's overall performance.

"The main area we have to get better in is long snapping," Ditka said. "We had some bad snaps on the field goals and extra-points and that's killing us. We got to put the ball where Kevin can see what he's doing."

"I mean, he's not going to make the field goal if the ball is rolling on the ground. We have to become better at that and we've worked on it every day and we'll continue to work on it."

Rodenhauser, the only replacement player activated by the Bears, offered no excuses for the poor snaps.

"There was one extra-point snap that was a little bit low," he said. "One field goal snap was real slow. The ball just snagged on the turf. I can't make any excuses."

McKinnon's return is crucial

The other crucial special teams play in the third quarter was McKinnon's 14-yard punt return to the Chiefs' 47. McKinnon took the punt on one bounce at his own 39 and burst down the left sideline before being run out of bounds. Six plays later, Jim McMahon hit Willie Gault with a 25-yard touchdown pass. Butler's extra-point pulled the Bears to within four points.

Despite missing a 52-yard field goal attempt in the fourth quarter, Butler had a good day on kickoffs. Butler kept Palmer in check by booting four of his five kickoffs into the end zone. Palmer, who entered the game second in the AFC with a 25.3 kickoff return average, was held to 48 return yards. Last week, Palmer compiled 148 yards on kickoff returns.

The fact that his return unit was dominated by the Bears didn't surprise Gansz.

"The Bears have one of the best special teams units in all of football," Gansz said.

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Chicago Bears

No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Yr.	College
6	Kevin Butler	K	6-1	204	25	3	Georgia
9	Jim McMahon	QB	6-1	190	28	6	BYU
14	Jim Harbaugh	QB	6-3	202	23	R	Michigan
15	Bryan Wagner	P	6-2	195	25	1	Cal-Northridge
18	Mike Tomczak	QB	6-1	195	25	3	Ohio State
20	Thomas Sanders	RB	5-11	203	25	3	Texas A&M
22	Dave Duerson	S	6-1	210	26	5	Notre Dame
24	Vestee Jackson	CB	6-0	186	24	2	Washington
25	Todd Bell	S	6-1	212	28	6	Ohio State
26	Matt Suhey	FB	5-11	216	29	8	Penn State
27	Mike Richardson	CB	6-0	188	26	5	Arizona St.
29	Dennis Gentry	WR	5-8	180	28	6	Baylor
33	Calvin Thomas	FB	5-11	245	27	6	Illinois
34	Walter Payton	RB	5-10	205	33	13	Jackson St.
35	Neal Anderson	RB	5-11	210	23	2	Florida
37	Maurice Douglass	DB	5-11	200	23	2	Kentucky
45	Gary Fencik	S	6-1	193	33	12	Yale
48	Reggie Phillips	DB	5-10	170	26	3	S. Methodist
50	Mike Singletary	LB	6-0	235	29	7	Baylor
51	Jim Morrissey	LB	6-3	222	24	3	Michigan State
53	Mark Rodenhausen	C	6-5	260	26	R	Illinois St
54	John Adickes	C	6-3	264	23	R	Baylor
55	Otis Wilson	LB	6-2	227	30	8	Louisville
57	Tom Thayer	G	6-4	280	26	3	Notre Dame
58	Wilber Marshall	LB	6-1	230	25	4	Florida
59	Ron Rivera	LB	6-3	235	25	4	California
62	Mark Bortz	G	6-6	275	26	5	Iowa
63	Jay Hilgenberg	C	6-3	260	27	7	Iowa
67	Will Johnson	DE	6-4	245	22	R	N.E. Louisiana
68	Paul Blair	T	6-4	295	24	2	Oklahoma St.
72	William Perry	DT	6-2	315	24	3	Clemson
74	Jim Covert	T	6-4	275	27	5	Pittsburgh
76	Steve McMichael	DT	6-2	265	30	8	Texas
78	Keith Van Horne	T	6-6	285	29	7	USC
79	Kurt Becker	G	6-5	280	28	6	Michigan
83	Willie Gault	WR	6-1	183	27	5	Tennessee
84	Ron Morris	WR	6-1	187	22	R	SMU
85	Dennis McKinnon	WR	6-1	185	26	4	Florida State
86	Cap Boso	TE	6-3	224	25	1	Illinois
87	Emergy Moorehead	TE	6-2	225	33	11	Colorado
89	Keith Ortego	WR	6-0	180	24	3	McNeese State
90	Al Harris	LB/DE	6-5	270	30	8	Arizona State
95	Richard Dent	DE	6-5	263	26	5	Tenn State
97	Sean Smith	DE	6-4	275	22	R	Grambling
99	Dan Hampton	DE	6-5	267	30	9	Arkansas

INJURED RESERVE: WR Lew Barnes; DT Dick Chapura; S Kyle Kafentzis; LB Paul Migliazzo; C Larry Rubens; G Ronnie James Carter; T Brent Sowell; TE Tim Wrightman; WR Votie Patterson; DB Shaun Gayle.

PHYSICALLY UNABLE TO PERFORM: QB Steve Fuller.

Things are getting back to normal after the strike. Jim McMahon is again quarterbacking the Bears and pulling out wins. Doug Flutie is playing back on the East Coast. And the Bears are playing the Packers.

The only thing that will be missing from Sunday's game at Lambeau Field in Green Bay is Charles Martin, the instant villain who body-slammed McMahon to the turf in last year's meeting between the two rivals at Soldier Field.

These days, Martin is a member of the Houston Oilers, traded there during the strike.

While McMahon is back just in time for this year's matchup with the Packers, Green Bay is being led by an unlikely candidate for starting quarterback, rookie Don Majkowski.

Majkowski is a 10th-round draft choice out of Virginia who took the starting job away from veteran Randy Wright. Wright missed much of the preseason holding out in a contract dispute.

So in steps Majkowski, leading the Packers to a 17-17 tie against Denver in the last game before the strike and a 34-33 last-minute win over the Lions in the first game after the strike.

On Sunday the Packers lost to Tampa Bay in Milwaukee, 23-17. The Bucs almost blew another big lead like they did the week earlier against the Bears. The Packers were down 20-0 in the third quarter and still had a 13-point lead with 6:25 left to play. Starting quarterback Don Majkowski was benched early in the second half and replaced by veteran Randy Wright.

Wright cut the Bucs' lead to six, but the Packer defense couldn't get the ball back to

give the offense a shot at winning the game. The loss dropped the Packers' record to 3-3-1. Majkowski was four of 13 passing for 43 yards and no interceptions. Wright completed 13 of 19 passes for 161 yards without an interception.

Game-winning drive impressive

Majkowski was perhaps most impressive in the final three minutes of the win over Detroit. The Packers had led by as much as 24-0 and 31-7 in the game. But Detroit scored 16 points in the second quarter and 14 more in the fourth quarter to take a 33-31 lead with 3:02 left.

In came Majkowski to direct a 42-yard, nine-play drive that ended in a 45-yard game-winning field goal by Al Del Greco.

On that last drive Majkowski completed passes of 20 and seven yards to Walter Stanley. A 15-yard run by running back Kenneth Davis put the Packers in field goal range.

Majkowski finished the game completing 19 of 29 passes for 323 yards, one interception and one touchdown.

Majkowski credited the strike for building his confidence and the team's confidence in him. "I think they stayed behind me the whole game, there's no doubt," he said. "They were getting tired, so I was trying to keep them up and they were complimenting me at the same time. I think they had a lot of confidence in me and I had a lot of confidence in them."

Said head coach Forrest Gregg about his young quarterback, "He really is confident in himself. He threw the ball well. I thought he really kept his poise well because they really came after us. He made some good adjustments where he threw to our hot reads and completed passes."

Facts and Figures

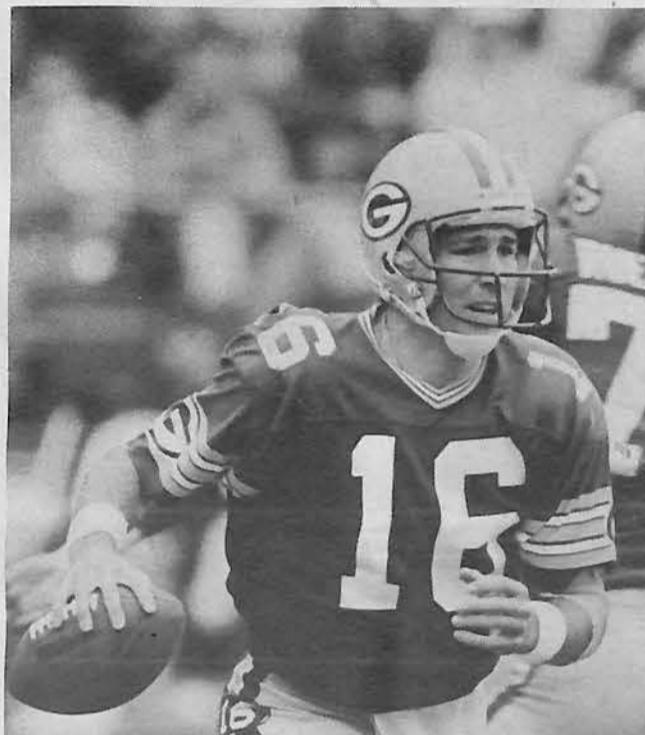
Kickoff: Sunday, Nov. 8, noon Central time.

Site: Lambeau Field, Green Bay.

Playing surface: Natural grass.

Series record: The Bears have a comfortable 72-55-6 lead in the series that dates back to 1921. The Bears have won the last four meetings, including 12-10 and 25-12 last year. The last Packers' win was in Week 15 of the 1984 season when Green Bay won, 20-14, at Soldier Field.

Radio-TV coverage: The game will be televised live in Chicago on CBS-TV, channel 2. WGN-Radio and the Bears radio network also will carry the game live. WOJO (105 FM) will broadcast the game in Spanish.



PACKER QUARTERBACK RANDY WRIGHT

Green Bay Packers

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Yr.	College
5	Don Majkowski	QB	6-2	197	23	R	Virginia
10	Al Del Greco	K	5-10	191	25	4	Auburn
16	Randy Wright	QB	6-2	203	26	4	Wisconsin
17	Don Bracken	P	6-0	211	25	3	Michigan
20	Kelly Cook	RB	5-10	225	25	1	Oklahoma St.
21	Brent Fullwood	RB	5-11	209	23	R	Auburn
22	Mark Lee	DB	5-11	189	29	8	Washington
23	Tiger Greene	DB	6-0	194	25	3	W. Carolina
29	Ken Stills	DB	5-10	186	23	3	Wisconsin
30	Paul Ott Carruth	RB	6-1	220	26	2	Alabama
32	Dave Brown	CB	6-1	197	34	13	Michigan
33	Jessie Clark	FB	6-0	228	27	5	Arkansas
36	Kenneth Davis	RB	5-10	209	25	2	Tex. Christian
37	Mark Murphy	SS	6-2	201	29	6	West Liberty
38	Norman Jefferson	DB	5-10	183	23	R	Louisiana St.
39	Kenneth Johnson	CB	6-0	185	23	1	Mississippi St.
44	Chris Mandeville	SS	6-1	213	22	R	Cal-Davis
47	Jim Bob Morris	DB	6-3	211	26	1	Kansas St.
50	Johnny Holland	LB	6-2	221	22	R	Texas A&M
52	Mike Weddington	LB	6-4	245	26	2	Oklahoma
54	Scott Stephen	LB	6-2	232	22	R	Arizona State
55	Vince Rafferty	C/G	6-4	285	26	1	Colorado
56	Burnell Dent	LB	6-1	236	24	2	Tulane
57	Rich Moran	OL	6-2	275	25	3	San Diego St.
58	Mark Cannon	C	6-3	258	25	4	Tex.-Arlington
59	John Anderson	LB	6-3	228	31	10	Michigan
61	Jerry Boyarsky	NT	6-3	290	28	7	Pitt
64	Steve Collier	OT	6-7	342	24	1	Bethune-Cookman
65	Ron Hallstrom	G	6-6	290	28	6	Iowa
67	David Logan	NT	6-2	250	30	9	Pittsburgh
69	Bill Cherry	C/G	6-4	277	26	2	Mid. Tenn. St.
70	Keith Uecker	G/T	6-5	284	27	5	Auburn
72	Tom Neville	T/G	6-5	306	25	2	Fresno St.
73	Alan Veingrad	T	6-5	277	24	2	East Texas St.
75	Ken Ruettgers	T	6-5	280	25	3	USC
76	Alphonso Carrasco	DE	6-6	271	25	4	Florida St.
77	Tommy Robison	T	6-4	290	26	R	Texas A&M
79	Ross Browner	DE	6-2	252	32		

Chicago on offense

OFFENSE



RB
34 Walter Payton
20 Thomas Sanders
35 Neal Anderson



QB
9 Jim McMahon
18 Mike Tomczak
14 Jim Harbaugh



FB
35 Neal Anderson
26 Matt Suhey
33 Calvin Thomas

SPECIALISTS

Punter
15 Bryan Wagnleitner
Kicker
6 Kevin Butler
Holder
18 Mike Tomczak

SPECIALISTS

Punt returner
85 Dennis McKinnon
Kick returner
29 Dennis Gentry
Kick center
53 Mark Rodenhauser



WR
83 Willie Gault
29 Dennis Gentry
89 Keith Ortego



TE
87 Emery Moorehead
86 Cap Boso



RT
78 Keith Van Horne
68 Paul Blair



RG
57 Tom Thayer
79 Kurt Becker



C
63 Jay Hilgenberg
54 John Adickes



LG
62 Mark Bortz
79 Kurt Becker



LT
74 Jim Covert
68 Paul Blair



WR
84 Ron Morris
85 Dennis McKinnon



LC
22 Mark Lee
38 Norman Jefferson



LOLB
59 John Anderson
52 Mike Weddington



LE
76 Alphonso Carreker
79 Robert Brown



LILB
91 Brian Noble
99 John Dorsey



SS
37 Mark Murphy
23 Tiger Greene
47 Jim Bob Morris

DEFENSE



RE
93 Robert Brown
79 Ross Browner



RC
32 Dave Brown
39 Ken Johnson



RILB
50 Johnny Holland
91 Brian Noble
56 Burnell Dent
51 Clayton Weishuhn



FS
29 Ken Stills
44 Chris Mandeville

SPECIALISTS

Punter
17 Don Bracken
Kicker
10 Al Del Greco
Kick center
69 Bill Cherry



WR
85 Phillip Epps
82 Keith Paskett
81 Lee Morris



TE
86 Ed West
89 Joey Hackett



RT
73 Alan Veingrad
64 Steve Collier



RG
65 Ron Hallstrom
77 Tom Robison



C
59 Mark Cannon
69 Bill Cherry
55 Vince Rafferty



FB
33 Jessie Clark
30 Paul Ott Carruth
44 Kelly Cook



LG
57 Rich Moran
72 Tom Neville



LT
75 Ken Ruettgers
73 Alan Veingrad
64 Steve Collier



WR
87 Walter Stanley
80 Frankie Neal
83 Patrick Scott



LCB
48 Reggie Phillips
27 Mike Richardson



LE
99 Dan Hampton
90 Al Harris



LT
76 Steve McMichael
97 Sean Smith



RT
72 William Perry
97 Sean Smith



RE
95 Richard Dent
90 Al Harris



RCB
24 Vestee Jackson
27 Mike Richardson



LLB
55 Otis Wilson
59 Ron Rivera
51 Jim Morrissey



MLB
50 Mike Singletary
59 Ron Rivera

FS
22 Dave Duerson
45 Gary Fencik



SS
25 Todd Bell
22 Dave Duerson
37 Maurice Douglas



RLB
58 Wilber Marshall
59 Ron Rivera
67 Will Johnson

Green Bay on offense

OFFENSE



HB
36 Kenneth Davis
21 Brent Fullwood



QB
5 Don Majkowski
16 Randy Wright
11 Alan Risher



FB
33 Jessie Clark
30 Paul Ott Carruth
44 Kelly Cook

SPECIALISTS

Punt returner
87 Walter Stanley
38 Norman Jefferson
Kick returner
21 Brent Fullwood
20 Kelly Cook



WR
85 Phillip Epps
82 Keith Paskett
81 Lee Morris



TE
86 Ed West
89 Joey Hackett



RT
73 Alan Veingrad
64 Steve Collier



RG
65 Ron Hallstrom
77 Tom Robison



C
59 Mark Cannon
69 Bill Cherry
55 Vince Rafferty



LG
57 Rich Moran
72 Tom Neville



LT
75 Ken Ruettgers
73 Alan Veingrad
64 Steve Collier



WR
87 Walter Stanley
80 Frankie Neal
83 Patrick Scott

DEFENSE



RT
72 William Perry
97 Sean Smith



RE
95 Richard Dent
90 Al Harris



RLB
58 Wilber Marshall
59 Ron Rivera
67 Will Johnson

BEAR NOTEBOOK

Fencik makes official his retirement

When Gary Fencik said last week this would be his last year as a player in the NFL, he couldn't understand what the big deal was. "This wasn't so much a decision. I thought it was an assumption by everybody, including all my teammates who know it's my last year," Fencik said.

His confirmation that this will be his last year comes after Fencik was removed after the strike as the nickel back on defense. He lost that job to **Mike Richardson**. In the preseason this year Fencik lost his job at free safety when **Dave Duerson** was moved there from strong safety to make room for **Todd Bell**.

At that point Fencik said he would have retired after last season if he had known that he wouldn't be starting for the Bears this year. Now his playing time is limited to special teams.

Fencik's roster spot has become even more precarious with the impending return of safety **Shaun Gayle**, who is also the special teams captain. But head coach **Mike Ditka** said he wouldn't release Fencik to make room for Gayle. So carrying five safeties is a possibility for the Bears the remainder of the year.

"I just want to end it on a real high note and real positively and still make a contribution this year," Fencik said.

Like **Walter Payton** when he announced this would probably be his final season, Fencik wouldn't say he was 100 percent certain he'd retire after the season. He said he could change his mind, but "I doubt that will

happen."

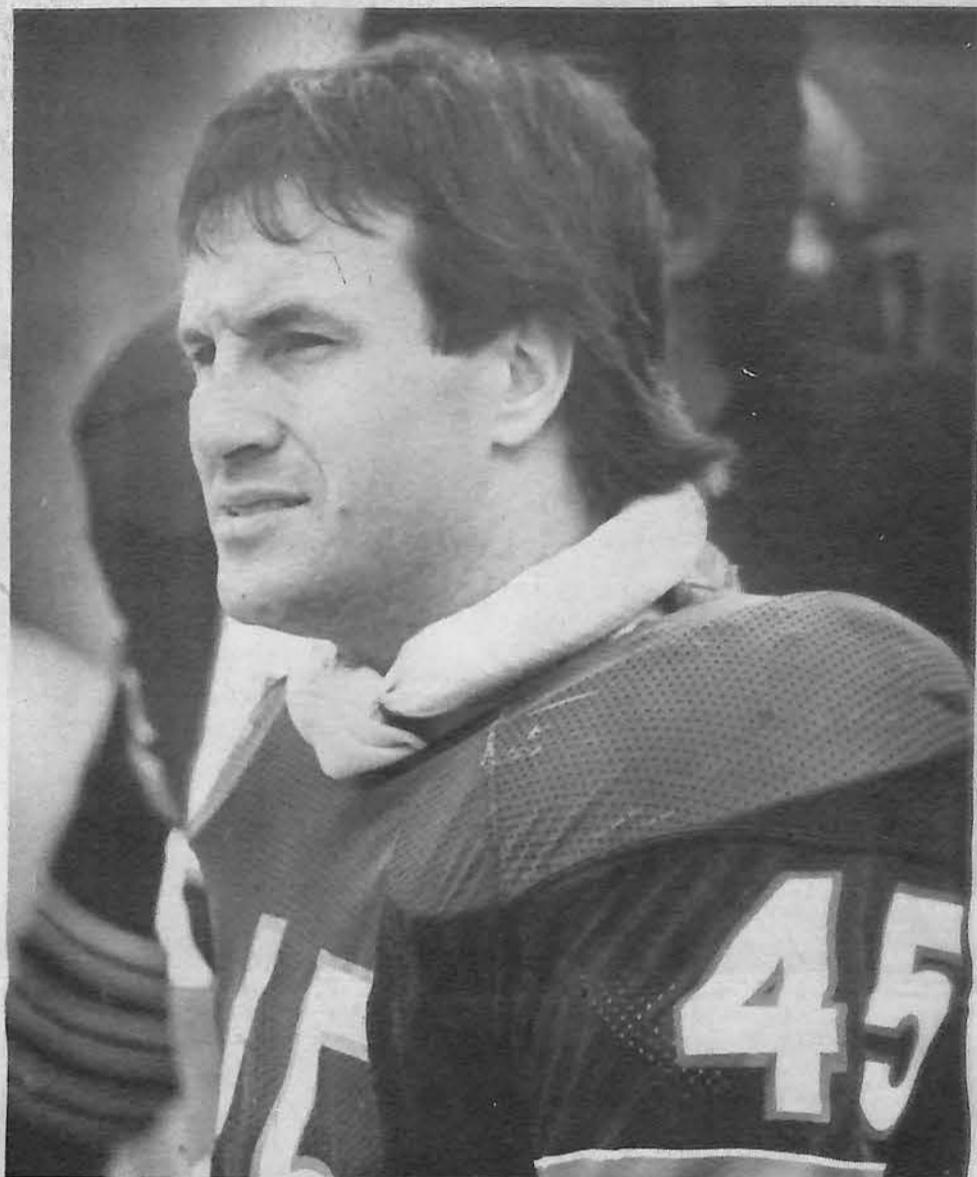
Fencik has made plenty of contributions to the Bears in the past. Going into this season he led the Bears in career tackles with 1,110, and he is the Bears' career leader in takeaways with 50 and interceptions with 38. He earned a spot on the Pro Bowl team in 1981 and 1982.

Fencik began his 12-year career with the Bears when he was claimed on waivers after being cut by the Dolphins in training camp in 1976. He was Miami's 10th-round draft choice that year.

•**FORMER BEAR MIKE HARTENSTINE**, who was cut by Chicago in training camp this summer after a 12-year career with the Bears, was signed last week by the Minnesota Vikings. Minnesota was in desperate need of a defensive lineman after injuries to Doug Martin, Mark Mullaney and Gerald Robinson.

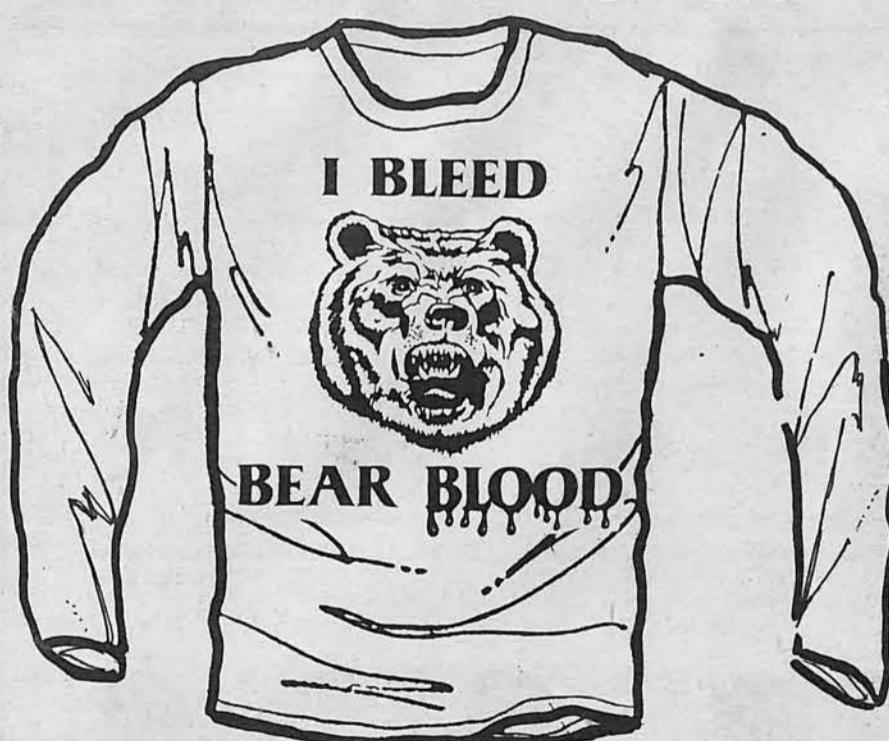
"I think he'll do a good job for them," Ditka said. "It might be a good opportunity for him. If they put Mike on the field I'll tell you one thing about him — he'll play as hard as he can. And usually that's pretty darn good."

Hartenstine was released after the Bears decided to go with rookie **Sean Smith** as a backup lineman. "Mike didn't fit into our plans. We're developing younger people and decided to go that way," Ditka said. "That's no slap to Mike because what he's contributed to the Bears in 12 years is a heck of a lot more than most people who ever played for the Bears. He's something special and I'm glad the opportunity came up for him to put a few extra bucks in his pockets."



After 12 seasons with the Bears, safety Gary Fencik says this will be his last one. (Bear Report photo by Steve Wolmann)

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•**CHICAGO'S RUNNING GAME** has Ditka a little worried. Going into Sunday's game the Bears were ranked 11th in the league in rushing. They've led the league in that category the last four seasons.

"We're not running the football nearly as effectively as we can," Ditka said. "I think we have to get better in that. We have to sustain our blocks a little better. It's not really our line's fault, either. I think they do a heck of a job."

Ditka said part of the problem may be himself. "I think I get away from the running game too quick."

But the circumstances, at least against Tampa Bay, have not been conducive to running the ball.

"We got behind 20-0 so you can't run the ball and use up time," fullback Neal Anderson said. "You have to kind of take what the defense in the game dictates. You can't just run the ball because you want to."

Ditka has molded the Bears into a winner by basing the offensive attack on the running game, and he'd like to keep it that way. "We built this football team a certain way and we won a certain way. And just to pitch that all out the window and say we're gonna throw 45, 50 times a game, I don't know that that's the answer," Ditka said. "I still want to see us get that running game back to where it belongs, and probably a lot of it's my fault."

Ditka said he'd like to see the Bears run the ball to the outside more. "We're trying to run the ball inside a lot more than in the past. And I think we have to get it to the perimeter, start running it outside and go back to some of our counter plays," Ditka said. "We're running at about a four-yard

average, which is really low for us. We've been 4.4, 4.5 the last couple of years. We've got to get that average back up."

•**THOUGH HIS TOTAL YARDAGE** going into Sunday's game was less than 100 yards, Payton still had the respect of Chiefs' head coach **Frank Gansz**. "I think Walter Payton is the kind of player in the National Football League that everyone should aspire to be," Gansz said. "He is the consummate professional. He is the state of the art. He's what everyone should try to be in his work habits, and his blocking and his team work. He is the very, very best."

•**ROOKIE WIDE RECEIVER RON MORRIS** got his first experience playing with Jim McMahon in a game against Tampa Bay, and he said things are a little different with McMahon in there.

"The thing about McMahon, he sees everything," Morris said. "You can be on the backside of the field and the play isn't designed for you, but you might be No. 1 when McMahon's in there. You have to be alert at all times. He just sees a lot more and you can just tell he knows the game a lot more with his experience."

Morris was impressed with McMahon long before he joined the Bears. He remembers one game in particular when McMahon was in college playing for Brigham Young. "I was in high school when they played SMU in the Holiday Bowl. They had him down like by three or four touchdowns in the third quarter," Morris said. "In the fourth quarter this guy throws like four touchdowns and beats SMU, 45-44. He's been doing it ever since then. It does impress me. I'm just glad to be

Continued Page 14

Bears learn how to come back

By the time the Bears won the Super Bowl two years ago, it was easy to forget that they trailed in four of their first five games that year by more than a touchdown. As much as they buried the league that year, it wasn't as though their opponents climbed into holes and waited for the Bears to shovel them in. Championships are never that easy in the NFL.

That's what makes winning squeakers more exhilarating than infuriating, although by a close margin. It's important, too. Beat-

KEVIN LAMB



ing Tampa Bay by one point may not look impressive in the season recap, but a team that misses the playoffs or home-field advantage by one game can usually point back to losing a game like that.

Since 1985, the Bears have played eight games when they trailed by more than a touchdown in the second half. Remarkably, they've won five of them.

"If there's a way, we can make it happen," defensive end Richard Dent said after the victory at Tampa Bay. "We haven't been in the playoffs and Super Bowl for no reason

at all. We've been in that situation before."

A team learns things from being in that situation. It learns things that helps it win the next time the scoreboard starts tilting toward the loss column.

It learns it's worth the effort to keep playing hard. In a game where every play hurts, the temptation is strong to give in to a defeat that looks inevitable. "We could have easily died and said, 'What the hell. Let the game go,'" linebacker Otis Wilson said in Tampa. "But we don't have those kind of guys on our team."

It learns that even when it looks easier to lose than to win, it never is. Not in the long run. Losers wake up sore Monday morning, winners wake up stiff.

It learns the final score is the only score that matters, that winning with a red face is as good as winning with a puffed chest. When the Bears got the ball with 2:44 to play and six points to make up, they knew it didn't matter that they'd embarrassed themselves with play as sloppy as the tablecloth at a 4-year-old's birthday party. They knew they still had a chance to win, the cards would be dealt one more time for everything on the table.

There's always time to improve

It learns there is always time to improve. In the first half at Tampa Bay, the offensive line was outhit and outwitted. On the last two drives, under the difficult circumstances of blocking pass rushers who expected passes, the offensive line protected quarterback Jim McMahon like a bunker. "We just knew we had to do it," center Jay Hilgenberg said. "If we didn't, we'd lose."

It learns to keep its cool. It huddles on the last drive, rookie wide receiver Ron Morris

said, "Nobody got down. But nobody got too excited, either. Jim kept everybody calm."

It learns close games can be decided by single plays. And it learns how to make those plays.

It learns to make them by simply carrying out assignments, not by barreling helter-skelter all over the field. It learns confidence in each other that if each guy does his job, one of them will be in position to make the big play. And it learns to look for the opportunities. They don't always leap out like a skyrocketing snap from center.

"Anybody can win," safety Todd Bell said. "But a champion finds a way to come out of it a winner when he's on the ropes, like we were."

A champion figures out how to win on a play from the six-yard line that's designed to go 18 yards. That's when McMahon called for the winning touchdown. "He thought the way they were playing defense, the receivers would be open when they went into their breaks," offensive coordinator Ed Hughes said.

He was wrong. They weren't. Not the intended receivers, anyway. But Neal Anderson, who was scheduled to block a blitzer on the play, wound up open when the blitzer didn't blitz. McMahon knew to look for him. "He sees everything," Morris said after Anderson caught the winning touchdown pass.

Just as important, the Bears have learned in the last three years how to hold a lead. Losing teams don't learn that. That's why losing teams lose so many games in the last minutes to winning teams they've outplayed for most of the game.

Losing teams are afraid to lose. They be-

come cautious. They stop doing the things that made them look so good until the last few minutes.

Zone opens up Bears' offense

The Bucs stifled the Bears' offense most of that game by playing aggressive defense. They rushed four or five men. They covered receivers tightly. They limited the Bears to 144 yards before giving up 156 on the last two drives, before blowing a 26-14 lead in the last 10 minutes.

"They started playing more zone," coach Mike Ditka said. "They pressured us in the first half, but then they gave us a lot more room, especially on that last drive. How many times have you seen that happen?"

The outcome was clear on the first play of the 71-yard drive. Willie Gault ran a deep route to the left sideline. Cornerback Rod Jones sure wasn't going to give up the winning touchdown. He stayed between Gault and the goal line. He stayed almost halfway between Gault and the goal line. He covered him like a doily.

So Gault was not only wide open for a 19-yard gain, he was able to run out of bounds. "I knew right then we had an excellent chance to beat them with deep outs," Gault said. For fear of losing, the Bucs were giving the Bears the one thing they needed to win the game on a hurry-up drive.

If they'd already learned how to climb out of holes, the Bears also should have learned how to avoid falling into them. But that's a lesson that takes more repetition. As linebacker Mike Singletary said, "We thought when we went out on the field, Tampa Bay would go back in."

So if a thrilling comeback win "shows you

Continued Page 13



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CENTRAL ISSUES

Bears, Bucs benefit most from strike

BY JOHN DELCOS

The recent NFL Players Association strike was a breeding ground for fallacies and lies.

One of the biggest was that nobody wins or loses in a strike. This might be true in a public relations sense, but it isn't when won-loss records are examined. Many teams — including those in the NFC Central Division — have their playoff chances enhanced by the strike, while others must think about next season.

The biggest winners in the NFC Central were Chicago (2-1 during the strike) and Tampa Bay (2-1); Green Bay (2-1) was a marginal winner; while Detroit (1-2) and Minnesota (0-3) were losers.

On the surface, it might seem odd to say the Bears won, because at the six-week mark they probably would've been 5-1 anyway, if not undefeated. The Bears' gain is a three-fold process in that, 1) they didn't lose any ground, 2) their injured players — notably quarterback Jim McMahon — had a chance to heal, and 3) the team unity established will show itself down the stretch.

While other teams have fragmented and started to point fingers, Chicago is a happy family. That can't be underestimated. It also has to be underscored that if the Bears hold their big lead, it will enable Coach Mike Ditka to rest McMahon and Walter Payton for the playoffs.

Tampa Bay caught a break in that it now has a shot at the playoffs it normally might not have. The replacement team not only gave the Bucs a better record after six weeks than anticipated, but allows them to control their own destiny for a wild-card berth.

Don't laugh — the schedule is in their favor. The Bucs have games with St. Louis (twice), Minnesota, New Orleans, Detroit and Indianapolis — all beatable teams. They also play the 49ers and the Rams, but the latter looks to have sacrificed 1987 with the benching of Eric Dickerson. In addition to the Rams, the Vikings and New York Giants had their playoff aspirations damaged.

The strike also put the Packers in a position to challenge for a wild-card berth should they get hot. However, their schedule is rough, with games against Chicago (twice), Seattle, San Francisco and the Giants.

When the strike began the Vikings were 2-0; when it ended they were 2-3. The Vikings remain alive because the Rams and Giants were big strike losers. However, heading into last week's games, Minnesota held a two-game lead over the Rams and Giants, which means it can make the playoffs without outside help. Minnesota's schedule includes the Los Angeles Raiders, Chicago and Washington — all at home.



Mike Ditka coached the Bears to a 2-1 record during the strike, putting Chicago in good shape when the regular players came back to work. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

The strike only knocked the bottom out sooner for the Lions.

Ford ripped head coach Darryl Rogers. Then defensive coordinator Wayne Fontes was charged with cocaine possession and two counts of drunken driving.

After losing to Green Bay, Ford called the Lions "a lousy football team." Regarding the coaches, whom Ford labeled "passive," the owner said: "I haven't lost confidence, but I'm disappointed. I really don't know what kind of a call to make on them."

If history is an indicator, Rogers will get the traditional "vote of confidence," then be fired. Rogers has accepted the inevitable. "I don't think you can ever be in this business without being concerned about job security," he said. "There isn't any, so there's no sense in worrying about it."

Fontes, who is free on \$7,000 bond, has other things to worry about. If convicted, he faces four years in prison and a \$2,000 fine for the cocaine charge, and 90 days in jail, a \$500 fine and a license suspension for the DWI charges.

"I didn't have any controlled substances. I didn't have any cocaine," Fontes said.

Rogers called the situation a "private matter," and said no disciplinary actions have been taken.

NOTES: How unified were the Lions during the strike? Thirty players left town. As far as workouts went, a five-on-five game of touch football was the best they could do.

... QB Joe Ferguson said if he had the benefit of hindsight, he wouldn't have gone on strike: "I thought about coming back, but it seemed like the strike was going to end every week." ... DE Eric Williams, one of the more quotable Lions during the strike,

said he would no longer talk to reporters.

THIS WEEK: Home to Dallas. The Cowboys lead, 7-3. The last meeting was a 31-7 Dallas victory at Detroit last season. The Lions have won two of the last three games.

Injuries — Williams (hip), CB Bobby Watkins (thigh), G Keith Dorney (elbow) and TE Mark Lewis (calf).



Green Bay Packers

GREEN BAY: The 2-1 record by their replacement team has given the Packers a winning record this far into the season for the first time since 1982.

"We have improved personnel-wise, but our biggest improvement is our attitude about the game," Coach Forrest Gregg said.

Gregg wrote each replacement player a letter thanking him for his effort. In part, the letter read: "I have enjoyed coaching this football team as much as any I have coached, and every bit as much as I enjoyed coaching the championship team I had with the Cincinnati Bengals in 1981. It has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life."

NOTES: Keith Uecker, who was the only regular to cross, started at guard in the final replacement game, but returned to tackle.

... CB Elbert Watts, who suffered a dislocated knee in training camp, said he will play again.

THIS WEEK: Home to Chicago. The Bears lead, 7-2-5-6. The Bears have won six of the last seven games, including both last season - 25-12 at Green Bay and 12-10 at Chicago.

Injuries — Uecker (knee), G Tommy Robison (ankle).



Minnesota Vikings

MINNESOTA: Quarterback Tommy Kramer's drunk-driving charges and rehabilitation program have been well-documented. However, he isn't the only Viking with an alcohol problem. Six times in the past 13 months a Viking has been stopped for drunk driving, including NT Tim Newton twice. Newton also has a marijuana possession charge against him in 1985.

Newton and rookie QB Rich Gannon were each stopped during the strike.

NOTES: Kramer said the pinched nerve in his neck has healed, but Wade Wilson remains the starter. ... RB Darrin Nelson, who rushed for 88 yards in a Monday night victory over Denver, injured his back lifting a record player. ... Former Chicago DE Mike Hartenstein was signed. ... Traded late-round 1988-89 draft picks to Miami for OT Greg Koch.

THIS WEEK: Home to Los Angeles Raiders. Los Angeles leads, 5-1. The Raiders have won the last five games, including the last meeting, a 23-20 decision at Los Angeles in 1984.

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NFL NOTEBOOK

Replacing replacements would have been tough

By Brian Hewitt

As far as Bear personnel boss Bill Tobin is concerned, the strike ended right on time.

"I'll be honest with you, we couldn't have kept this (non-union) group together much longer with baling wire, chewing gum and band-aids," he said. "We were getting gutted with injuries at the key positions and there was nobody out there."

Normally personnel directors keep track

BRIAN HEWITT



of the "scrap heap" which is another name for available players. But because of the replacement situation there is no scrap heap anymore.

Tobin also wanted to clarify the perception that management was gleeful over the players' surrender at the end of the strike. "Believe me," he said, "nobody's up here gloating that we won the strike or anything like that."

WATCH IT:

In their recent Kansas City meetings the NFL owners were smart not to create a split season.

The split season would have divided the rest of this year's schedule into a seven-game first half and an eight game second half. The idea was to give teams like the Giants, Vikings and Rams a chance to recover from damage done by poor records during replacement games.

The plan would have allotted a playoff spot for any team winning either its first or second half title. It would also have allowed two wild card teams from each conference. The maximum number of teams in the playoffs would have been 16, the minimum 10.

STRIKING NUMBERS:

The average NFL attendance for the first six weeks:

Week One: 57,398.

Week Two: 58,622.

Week Three: No games.

Week Four: 17,070.

Week Five: 27,357.

Week Six: 28,933.

THE UNION LABEL:

The feeling toward non-union players in Kansas City is mixed. The replacement Chiefs were 0-3.

"If they're gonna come in here and steal money, at least they could have come in here, stole some money and won some games," said union Kansas City linebacker Dino Hackett.

Said Chiefs' defensive back Albert Lewis: "From my perspective, I wanted those guys to win. The situation they were in was primarily our fault. If we hadn't gone out on strike, they wouldn't have had to come in and play. I'm not going to blame them for the record because it was a tough situation for anybody."

HOLY HANKY:

The priest at Viking coach Jerry Burns' church was waving a hanky on the pulpit last week in a show of respect for the "Homer Hanky" that took Minnesota baseball fans by storm. Burns said the priest called it the "Homily Hanky."

Meanwhile, the Vikings brought back only one non-union player to practice. He is defensive lineman Stafford Mays. Asked for his reaction, guard Dave Huffman said, "What are we supposed to do, shoot him? What kind of reaction do you want? Beat him to death? Hang him in effigy? Take him out and pound him? He's trying to earn a buck like everyone else."

GIANT LETDOWN

The Giants won their last 12 games of 1986 by an average margin of victory of 12.8 points. The 1987 Giants have lost their first five by an average margin of defeat of 12.9 points.

Only once in the team's 63-year history has the franchise had a worse start. That was 0-9 in 1976.

Before their first win, the Giants practiced twice a day in a desperate attempt to prepare for the Cardinals.

"We're not in a hole, we're in a canyon," said linebacker Harry Carson.

Added linebacker Carl Banks: "There's a lot of ways you can look at it. But they've all got zero in front of it."

Finally this from club vice-president Tim Mara: "We're all but dead. It'll take a miracle to keep us alive."

THE WINNER:

The Chargers won all three of their replacement games. And all three were on the road. It marked the first time the franchise has won three straight on the road since 1963.

At the start of the strike, regular Charger nose tackle Mike Charles called the non-union Chargers "Keystone Cops." Later Charles apologized.

"I think Keystone Cops were a bunch of bunglers who couldn't get things done," he said. "But these guys proved me wrong."

MEYER'S RUM:

Colt coach Ron Meyer gets the "creative use of the language award" for recent remarks such as:

Referring to his non-union team as having to become "acclimatized" to the Colts' offense.

Then he said he hoped they reached their full "potentialities."

After the first non-union game he said the non-union players made the kind of mistakes that make you "gash your teeth."

When the regulars returned and practiced with the inactive non-union players for the first time, Meyer said, "the pot has thickened."

NOTES AND QUOTES:

•When Jet defensive end Mark Gastineau registered a sack against Miami it was his first in 33 quarters. That includes pre-season games.

•Twenty-six of 30 playoff teams the last two years won post-season spots by two games or less.

•Former Bear defensive lineman Henry



Injuries at quarterback and running back spread the Bears thin during the strike, forcing Steve Bradley (12) and Chris Brewer (32) to pick up the slack. (Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

Waechter, who played so well for the Redskins recently against the Cowboys, is now on Washington's injured reserve list with a minor shoulder injury.

•Denver receiver/returner Shane Swanson, a replacement player, set a single-game team record for all-purpose yards in Week Five with 290. The Broncos rewarded Swanson by cutting him.

•Sign in Texas Stadium during the last replacement game: "WHITE'S A WEENIE WE WANT SWEENEY." Stadium officials ordered the sign removed. It referred to quarterback Danny White and backup Cowboy quarterback Kevin Sweeney.

•The Chiefs, for the third time in five years, have changed starting quarterbacks from somebody to Bill Kenney. "To win, we've got to get the right people in the right places at the right time," said rookie coach Frank Gansz. The Chiefs were 1-4 at the time.

Lamb

Continued From Page 11

have a little character," as tackle Jimbo Covert said, "it also shows you can be beaten in any Sunday. This woke a lot of guys up."

"We found out we're mortals," Ditka said. "I thought we went down to Tampa thinking we were better than mortal. We bleed red. We were bleeding like hell at halftime. I saw it everywhere."

"The Bear helmet scares nobody. The Bear jersey doesn't scare anybody. People in the jerseys can scare them if they play good. That's what we've got to do." Learning how to do it only helps if they remember.

"We made the plays when we have to have them," wide receiver Dennis McKinnon said. The Bears learned that was all that counted.

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SIDELINES

Bears to play in Sweden next year

The Bears will make another preseason trip overseas next year when they travel to Goteborg, Sweden to play the Minnesota Vikings the weekend of Aug. 12-14.

It'll be the second overseas trip in three years for the Bears, who played the Cowboys in the American Bowl in the 1986 preseason in London. This year the Broncos played the Rams in London, but there'll be no American Bowl in England next year.

One other game is scheduled on foreign soil next summer, the Jets vs. the Browns in Montreal the weekend after the Bears-Vikings game.

Head coach Mike Ditka and his players are looking forward to the Sweden trip. "I think it's great. I think it's going to be fantastic," center Jay Hilgenberg said. "I'm extremely excited about it. I thought London was fantastic. It'll be a lot of fun. We should do it every year."

Neal Anderson was a rookie with the Bears when they went to London in 1986, but he was left behind while holding out in a contract dispute. So he's looking forward to the Sweden trip. "It'll be good to get away and break the monotony," Anderson said. "So it should be a good experience. It'll probably speed up the preseason and make it seem a little shorter."

Ditka also is looking forward to a trip overseas. "I don't get a chance to go very many places except golf courses," Ditka said. "It's the second game so that means we'll have all our camp out of the way. We'll play the preseason game and then hook them up and go over there and party with the Vikings for a week. Then we'll come back home and get ready to play football. It'll be the pause that refreshes."

Bear of the week: Ron Morris

Age: 22

Birthplace: Cooper, TX.

Height: 6-1

Weight: 190

College: SMU

Family: Wife, Candi; daughter, Maghan.

The last good movie I saw: I'm into horror films. So I guess the last good movie I saw was "The Curse." It was real gross.

Favorite actor: I like Clint Eastwood. He's tough. And I'm into comedy. I like listening to Eddie Murphy and Richard Pryor.

Favorite musician: I have a lot of different groups I like. I guess it would be Janet Jackson.

Favorite childhood memory: It was my sophomore year in high school and I was getting ready to run track. My freshman year all the guys in the district kicked my butt. I was in seventh place and they were beating me by long margins. And my sophomore year I was beating everybody. And then I went to state the three years after that.

Nobody knows I'm: Married. A lot of girls think I'm just hanging out with everybody else looking for a good time or whatever. But I have to let them know I'm married.

Philosophy of life: Every day when I wake up, even if I'm in a bad mood, I'm thinking positive. I try to use positive reinforcement to help me get through the day. As long as you think positive you can overcome most of the bad things that happen to you.

The worst part of my job: Believe it or not, I don't have one. But I guess there's a lot of things said by the coaches, but I think of it only as things to help me get better. Whatever is said, I know it's a coaching point. Some people take it as direct, but I listen to it and then let it go in this ear and out the other.

The weirdest thing I've ever done:



After a football game in Dallas in college a few of the guys went out to have a few beers. I'm such a quiet guy, and this is really weird on my part, because I tried to start a fight. We didn't fight, but I was trying to get something started.

The best advice I've gotten: It's from my mom. Always be positive about things. Always treat people fairly and they'll do the same.

Favorite video game: I have a Nitendo system. My favorite game of all the tapes is Zelda. It's amazing. I haven't mastered it yet. It's taken me about

three months so far. I'll get it by Christmas.

Favorite television show: The Cosby Show.

Favorite pig-out food: The Wendy's triple-deck hamburger, the Big Classic with everything on it, and a large Coke.

The car I drive: Mustang GT.

My friends in high school thought I was: A good team player and a good team leader. To this day I don't think I've lost one high school friend. We all got along and they thought I was a pretty good guy.

Notebook

Continued From Page 10

here with him."

Ditka said the Bears perform so much better with McMahon because he makes things happen on his own. "A lot of it Jim made happen," Ditka said about the Tampa Bay game. "He moved up in the pocket, moved away from two rushes and moved away from another one. Those are key plays. I thought he made those plays himself."

Ditka also saw the same old McMahon in there. "Nothing's changed. He ran the ball, he dove head first. He's gonna do it his way because the only thing he's trying to do is make a good play," Ditka said.

No soreness was reported in McMahon's shoulder last week during practice. "Unbelievable. He let it go right off the bat. Threw it as good as he did Sunday," Ditka said.

•THE BEARS USED THE SAME roster Sunday as they did against the Bucs a week earlier. The roster had three centers, Jay Hilgenberg, Mark Rodenhauser and John Adickes.

Adickes did not play in the game because Rodenhauser again was used for long snaps.

Ditka talked earlier in the week about activating **Shaun Gayle**, who is eligible to return from the injured list. Gayle hurt his an-

kle earlier in the year.

One way to get Gayle back on the roster would be to release Fencik, but Ditka doesn't see that happening. "There's a lot of scenarios you could go through. Right now, I don't see that happening," Ditka said. "There's a place for people who can contribute, and they both can contribute."

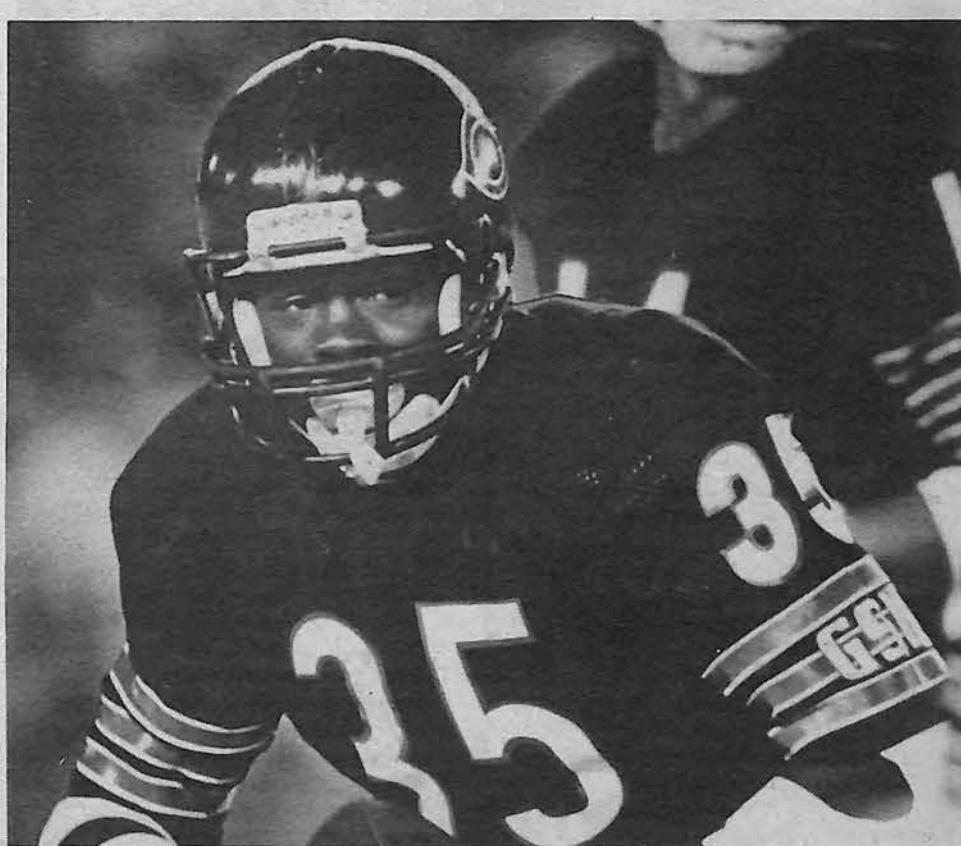
Ditka said the Bears have to make a decision on who to keep at center because they can't continue to carry three on the roster. He'd like to see the roster increased to 49 or 50, but that's not likely to happen.

•BEARS' PLAYER REPRESENTATIVE Mike Singletary and assistant rep Dave Duerson are resigning their positions after the season. Singletary said he's resigning simply because it's time to give the job to someone else. He's been the Bears' player rep since 1982 and has now gone through two strikes.

Duerson said he wants to get back to football and worry about labor relations after his playing career is over. Duerson studied labor relations at Notre Dame.

The most likely candidates to replace them are **Ron Rivera** and **Gayle**. Rivera has expressed interest in the position, and both he and Gayle were active leaders on the team during the strike.

The players probably will vote on new reps in May during their mini-camp.



Neal Anderson says game situations and opposing defenses haven't allowed the Bears to rush the ball as much as they'd like to this season. (Bear Report photo by Steve Wolmann)

Comeback

Continued From Page 4

their own 20.

McMahon then completed a short pass to Boso before connecting with Anderson for 13 yards and Gentry for 19 yards, putting the ball at the Chiefs' 28-yard line.

On first down from there McMahon threw to Boso, who made a sliding catch at the goal line for the touchdown and a 14-14 tie with 5:05 left in the half.

Boso could understand the kind of day Moorehead was having. "Everybody has

those days," Boso said. "Emery's helped me out so much in learning this offense. I don't know what the situation is. But Emery's a good player and I'm just hoping to contribute."

"He's a tough son of a gun," McMahon said about Boso. "He catches the football and he's tough to tackle. He's making big plays for us."

But when the Chiefs got the ball back, they marched right down the field 66 yards to score on a four-yard pass from Kenney to Larry Moriarty as time ran out in the half.

On the Chiefs' first possession of the second half, the Bears fell victim to the flea-flicker for the second week in a row. This

time from the Bear 43, Kenney handed off to Moriarty, who ran up the middle to the line of scrimmage and flipped the ball back to Kenney. Kenney then threw deep to Paige, who caught the ball at the goal line behind Duerson for the score and a 28-14 Kansas City lead.

Kenney ties career mark

That was Kenney's fourth touchdown pass of the game, tying his career high.

"It was dumb on my part," Duerson said. "I'm playing the ball instead of the man. I'm thinking turnover. I turned it over, all right. I gave it to our offense but with seven more points on the board."

The Bears added three points on a 27-yard field by Kevin Butler to close within 28-17 with 2:30 left in the third quarter.

That was the start of the Bears' final comeback in the game. After the flea-flicker touchdown, the Bear defense allowed only three first downs the rest of the way. Okoye, who gained 83 yards rushing in the first half for the Chiefs, was held to just 10 rushing yards in the second half. And Kenney completed just five of 13 passes in the second half.

Big-time defense in second half

"Our guys are still playing with great intensity out there," Ditka said. About the defense's play in the second half he added, "It's big-time defense. That's the way we should play the whole game. We can't afford to get behind by 20 points. It's like coming out of camp again. We have to get things straightened out."

Chicago's running game has struggled all season, and it gained only 80 yards Sunday. "We didn't really run the ball like we wanted to because we didn't have it," Anderson said.

McMahon added, "We've got some great backs. But they shut them down pretty well. And once we get behind, Mike (Ditka) likes to throw it."

McMahon injured a leg muscle in the first half but was able to continue playing. He said after the game he wasn't sure if he injured a groin muscle or his hamstring. But he said he'd probably be limited during practices this week while preparing for Green Bay on Sunday.

VIEWPOINT

Mail Letters To: 1271 W. Dundee Rd., Box 89E, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089

Tomczak will lead Bears in future

Oct. 22, 1987

Dear Doug,

Mike Tomczak is a great quarterback, and I'm very happy that he's finally getting the respect he deserves. He has worked very hard to get where he is today, and I give him all the credit in the world. I feel that he can definitely lead the Bears to the Super Bowl

in San Diego next January. It's called confidence!

All the doubters out there better keep an eye on Mike Tomczak. He will lead the Chicago Bears for many years to come.

I would like to thank you for letting me express my opinions, and congratulations on a very fine publication. I'm glad I subscribe.

Kris Willson
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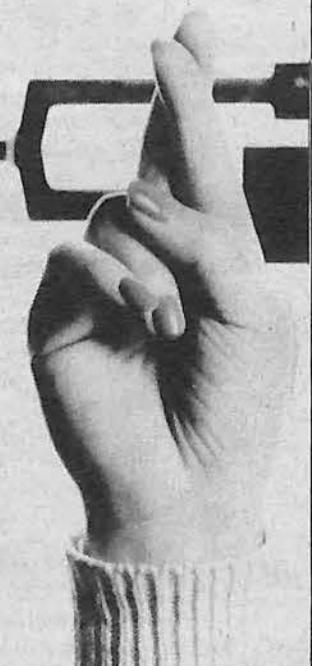
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1987 NFL SCHEDULE

Week 1

Sunday, Sept. 13
 L.A. Raiders 20, Green Bay 0
 Minnesota 34, Detroit 19
 Kansas City 20, San Diego 13
 New Orleans 28, Cleveland 21
 N.Y. Jets 31, Buffalo 28
 Houston 20, L.A. Rams 16
 New England 28, Miami 21
 Pittsburgh 30, San Francisco 17
 Cincinnati 23, Indianapolis 21
 St. Louis 24, Dallas 13
 Tampa Bay 48, Atlanta 10
 Washington 34, Philadelphia 24
 Denver 40, Seattle 17

Monday, Sept. 14
 Chicago 34, Giants 19

Week 2

Sunday, Sept. 20
 Denver 17, Green Bay 17
 Chicago 20, Tampa Bay 3
 Minnesota 21, L.A. Rams 16
 L.A. Raiders 27, Detroit 7
 Philadelphia 27, New Orleans 17
 Atlanta 21, Washington 20
 Dallas 16, N.Y. Giants 14
 Buffalo 34, Houston 30
 Miami 23, Indianapolis 10
 Cleveland 34, Pittsburgh 10
 Seattle 43, Kansas City 14
 San Francisco 27, Cincinnati 26
 San Diego 28, St. Louis 24

Monday, Sept. 21
 N.Y. Jets 44, New England 24

Week 3

Sunday, Sept. 27
 Atlanta at New Orleans
 Buffalo at Dallas
 N.Y. Giants at Miami
 Indianapolis at St. Louis
 New England at Washington
 Minnesota at Kansas City
 Green Bay at Tampa Bay
 Chicago at Detroit
 L.A. Raiders at Houston
 N.Y. Jets at Pittsburgh
 Seattle at San Diego
 Cincinnati at L.A. Rams
 Philadelphia at San Francisco
Monday, Sept. 28
 Denver at Cleveland

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Week 4

Sunday, Oct. 4
 Green Bay 23, Minnesota 16
 Pittsburgh 28, Atlanta 12
 San Diego 10, Cincinnati 9
 Cleveland 20, New England 10
 Indianapolis 47, Buffalo 6
 Tampa Bay 31, Detroit 27
 Chicago 35, Philadelphia 3
 Washington 28, St. Louis 21
 New Orleans 37, L.A. Rams 10
 Houston 40, Denver 10
 L.A. Raiders 35, Kansas City 17
 Dallas 38, N.Y. Jets 24
 Seattle 24, Miami 20
Monday, Oct. 5
 San Francisco 41, N.Y. Giants 21

Week 5

Sunday, Oct. 11
 Detroit 19, Green Bay 16 (OT)
 St. Louis 24, New Orleans 19
 Dallas 41, Philadelphia 22
 Chicago 27, Minnesota 7
 San Diego 17, Tampa Bay 13
 New England 14, Buffalo 7
 Houston 15, Cleveland 10
 Indianapolis 6, New York Jets 0
 Miami 42, Kansas City 0
 Washington 38, N.Y. Giants 12
 Cincinnati 17, Seattle 10
 San Francisco 25, Atlanta 17
 L.A. Rams 31, Pittsburgh 21
Monday, Oct. 12
 Denver 30, L.A. Raiders 14

Week 6

Sunday, Oct. 18
 Pittsburgh 21, Indianapolis 7
 Seattle 37, Detroit 14
 New York Jets 37, Miami 31 (OT)
 New England 21, Houston 7
 Cleveland 34, Cincinnati 0
 Green Bay 16, Philadelphia 10 (OT)
 New Orleans 19, Chicago 17
 Tampa Bay 20, Minnesota 10
 Atlanta 24, Los Angeles Rams 20
 Buffalo 6, New York Giants 3 (OT)
 San Diego 23, Los Angeles Raiders 17
 Denver 26, Kansas City 17
 San Francisco 34, St. Louis 28
Monday, Oct. 19
 Washington 13, Dallas 7

Week 7

Sunday, Oct. 25
 Green Bay 34, Detroit 33
 Houston 37, Atlanta 33
 Buffalo 34, Miami 31 (OT)
 Chicago 27, Tampa Bay 26
 Pittsburgh 23, Cincinnati 20
 Philadelphia 37, Dallas 20
 Indianapolis 30, New England 16
 Washington 17, New York Jets 16
 San Francisco 24, New Orleans 22
 New York Giants 30, St. Louis 7
 Seattle 35, Los Angeles Raiders 13
 San Diego 42, Kansas City 21
Monday, Oct. 26
 Cleveland 30, L.A. Rams 17
 Minnesota 34, Denver 27

Week 8

Sunday, Nov. 1
 Houston 31, Cincinnati 29
 Indianapolis 19, N.Y. Jets 14
 Chicago 31, Kansas City 28
 New England 26, L.A. Raiders 23
 New Orleans 38, Atlanta 0
 Philadelphia 28, St. Louis 23
 Miami 35, Pittsburgh 24
 Tampa Bay 23, Green Bay 17
 Washington 27, Buffalo 7
 San Diego 27, Cleveland 24 (OT)
 Denver 34, Detroit 0
 Seattle 28, Minnesota 17
 San Francisco 31, L.A. Rams 10
Monday, Nov. 2
 N.Y. Giants at Dallas, 8 p.m.

NFL Standings

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Central Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
Chicago	6	1	0	.857	191	105
Tampa Bay	4	3	0	.571	164	128
Green Bay	3	3	1	.500	123	138
Minnesota	3	4	0	.429	139	160
Detroit	1	6	0	.143	119	213

East Division

Washington	6	1	0	.857	177	108
Dallas	3	3	0	.500	135	134
Philadelphia	3	4	0	.429	151	186
St. Louis	2	5	0	.286	151	180
N.Y. Giants	1	5	0	.167	99	142

West Division

San Francisco	6	1	0	.857	199	154
New Orleans	4	3	0	.571	180	123
Atlanta	2	5	0	.286	117	216
L.A. Rams	1	6	0	.143	120	184

Week 9

Sunday, Nov. 8
 Atlanta at Cleveland, noon
 Chicago at Green Bay, noon
 Dallas at Detroit, noon
 Denver at Buffalo, noon
 L.A. Raiders at Minnesota, noon
 Pittsburgh at Kansas City, noon
 San Diego at Indianapolis, noon
 Tampa Bay at St. Louis, noon
 Washington at Philadelphia, noon
 Houston at San Francisco, 3 p.m.
 New Orleans at L.A. Rams, 3 p.m.
 Miami at Cincinnati, 3 p.m.
 New England at N.Y. Giants, 7 p.m.
Monday, Nov. 9
 Seattle at N.Y. Jets, 8 p.m.

Week 10

Sunday, Nov. 15
 Buffalo at Cleveland, noon
 Dallas at New England, noon
 Detroit at Washington, noon
 Houston at Pittsburgh, noon
 L.A. Rams at St. Louis, noon
 Indianapolis at Miami, noon
 Tampa Bay at Minnesota, noon
 N.Y. Jets at Kansas City, noon
 Cincinnati at Atlanta, 3 p.m.
 Green Bay at Seattle, 3 p.m.
 New Orleans at San Francisco, 3 p.m.
 N.Y. Giants at Philadelphia, 3 p.m.
 L.A. Raiders at San Diego, 7 p.m.
Monday, Nov. 16
 Chicago at Denver, 8 p.m.

Week 11

Sunday, Nov. 22
 Atlanta at Minnesota, noon
 Buffalo at N.Y. Jets, noon
 Cleveland at Houston, noon
 Detroit at Chicago, noon
 Green Bay at Kansas City, noon
 Indianapolis at New England, noon
 Pittsburgh at Cincinnati, noon
 St. Louis at Philadelphia, noon
 San Francisco at Tampa Bay, noon
 N.Y. Giants at New Orleans, 3 p.m.
 San Diego at Seattle, 3 p.m.
 Denver at L.A. Raiders, 3 p.m.
 Miami at Dallas, 7 p.m.
Monday, Nov. 23
 L.A. Rams at Washington, 8 p.m.

Week 12

Thursday, Nov. 26
 Kansas City at Detroit, 11:30 a.m.
 Minnesota at Dallas, 3 p.m.
Sunday, Nov. 29
 Cincinnati at N.Y. Jets, noon
 Green Bay at Chicago, noon
 Houston at Indianapolis, noon
 Miami at Buffalo, noon
 New Orleans at Pittsburgh, noon
 Philadelphia at New England, noon
 St. Louis at Atlanta, noon
 Tampa Bay at L.A. Rams, 3 p.m.
 N.Y. Giants at Washington, 3 p.m.
 Denver at San Diego, 3 p.m.
 Cleveland at San Francisco, 7 p.m.
Monday, Nov. 30
 L.A. Raiders at Seattle, 8 p.m.

Week 13

Sunday, Dec. 6
 Atlanta at Dallas, noon
 Indianapolis at Cleveland, noon
 Kansas City at Cincinnati, noon
 L.A. Rams at Detroit, noon
 Philadelphia at N.Y. Giants, noon
 San Diego at Houston, noon
 San Francisco at Green Bay, noon
 Seattle at Pittsburgh, noon
 Washington at St. Louis, noon
 Buffalo at L.A. Raiders, 3 p.m.
 New England at Denver, 3 p.m.
 Tampa Bay at New Orleans, 3 p.m.
Monday, Dec. 7
 N.Y. Jets at Miami, 8 p.m.

Week 14

Sunday, Dec. 13
 Buffalo at Indianapolis, noon
 Cincinnati at Cleveland, noon
 Dallas at Washington, noon
 Houston at New Orleans, noon
 Miami at Philadelphia, noon
 Minnesota vs. Green Bay at Milw., noon
 N.Y. Jets at New England, noon
 L.A. Raiders at Kansas City, 3 p.m.
 N.Y. Giants at St. Louis, 3 p.m.
 Pittsburgh at San Diego, 3 p.m.
 Detroit at Tampa Bay, 3 p.m.
 Atlanta at L.A. Rams, 3 p.m.
 Denver at Seattle, 7 p.m.
Monday, Dec. 14
 Chicago at San Francisco, 8 p.m.

Week 15

Saturday, Dec. 19
 Green Bay at N.Y. Giants, 11:30 a.m.
 Kansas City at Denver, 3 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 20
 Minnesota at Detroit, noon
 New England at Buffalo, noon
 New Orleans at Cincinnati, noon
 Philadelphia at N.Y. Jets, noon
 Pittsburgh at Houston, noon
 San Francisco at Atlanta, noon
 Seattle at Chicago, noon
 St. Louis at Tampa Bay, 3 p.m.
 Indianapolis at San Diego, 3 p.m.
 Cleveland at L.A. Raiders, 3 p.m.
 Washington at Miami, 7 p.m.
Monday, Dec. 21
 Dallas at L.A. Rams, 8 p.m.

Week 16

Saturday, Dec. 26
 Cleveland at Pittsburgh, 11:30 a.m.
 Washington at Minnesota, 3 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 27
 Buffalo at Philadelphia, noon
 Cincinnati at Houston, noon
 Detroit at Atlanta, noon
 Green Bay at New Orleans, noon
 N.Y. Jets at N.Y. Giants, noon
 St. Louis at Dallas, noon
 Seattle at Kansas City, noon
 Tampa Bay at Indianapolis, noon
 San Diego at Denver, 3 p.m.
 Chicago at L.A. Raiders, 3 p.m.
 L.A. Rams at San Francisco, 7 p.m.
Monday, Dec. 28
 New England at Miami, 8 p.m.